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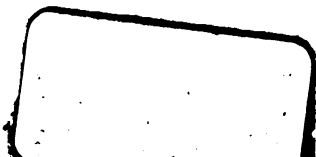
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AFRICA

A MISSIONARY POEM.

BY

REV. JOSEPH RIDGWAY, M.A.

RECTOR OF HIGH RODING, ESSEX.



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THE following short poem is one of a series, in which the effects of sin, as depicted in the sad condition of the unevangelized portions of the human race, and the triumphs of the Gospel, as illustrated in different scenes of missionary labour at the present day, are placed in contrast with each other.

The suppression or publication of the remaining parts depends on whether the present brief attempt is deemed worthy of perusal or otherwise.

April 26, 1842.

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AFRICA.

LAND of the sable African ! his home
If unmolested, eminent in woe,
From whose wide circling shores the bitter cries
Of suff'ring man, for centuries prolong'd,
Compassion vainly supplicate, thy name*
Descriptive of thy state, is well bestow'd ;
A sever'd land, mysteriously disjoined
From all the wonted sympathies of life,
And doom'd to be oppress'd, a vast extent
Of pathless regions, though intrepid men,

* Among the other roots from which the word "Africa" may have been derived, is the Hebrew term "phreka," broken off or separated, which strongly expresses the relation of this continent in reference to Asia, (from which it is nearly detached,) the original country of mankind. Thus Aphreka, slightly modified, is Africa, the detached or separated country." Meyer's Mod. Geog., vol. ii. 392

Martyrs to science, resolute to die,
Have oft essay'd to penetrate these depths,
And solve the myst'ry—plain and mountain range,
And sandy desert, where the scorching sun,
By the refreshing breeze of milder climes
Untemper'd, fiercely glares—when shall the light
Of welcome morn, aggressive on the gloom
Of ages, glorious rise ; the mists that long
Have veiled this mighty continent disperse
Before advancing day, and grace and truth
Like copious dew, drop fatness on the waste ?
When shall the welcome messengers of heaven,
With mercy charged, on deeds of love intent,
Visit each scatter'd tribe, each clime explore—
Kashna and Bornou, where the lake of Tchad
Glow's 'neath the solar ray, where Houssa lies
Or Timbuctoo, or where the long-sought tide
Of the majestic Niger winds its course—
As with unwearied eye the negro seeks,
Midst sand and clay, grains of the virgin gold,
From some rich crevice in the mountain's brow,
Wash'd by descending streams, thus searching out
Fragments of erring man more precious far.
O'er boundless tracts the sable nations spread,
Unnumber'd as the leaves that densely clothe
Their native forests, or the waves that beat
On Afric's shore.

Where the huge Atlas hides*
Its everlasting summits in the clouds,
As if with giant pillars to sustain
The firmament above, rich plains expand,
The ancient Mauritania, and the realms
Where once the Carthag^uenian merchant rul'd ;
The sea of Europe bathes them, and they lie
Shaded by guardian heights, that interpose
To screen their full luxuriance from the winds
Of the hot desert. Nature here assumes
A varying aspect ; lonely places blend
Their rugged features with more favoured spots,
And cultivation lingers on the verge
Of some wide waste monotonously drear ;
The lovely and unlovely all confused,
In contrast meet. From the disburthen'd branch
Drops the ripe olive, and the luscious fruit
Falls in the marble reservoir that waits
To save the precious harvest ; citrons vie
With swelling oranges, the clust'ring grape
And pomegranate abound, and breezes fresh
From everlasting snows, wafting along
The breath of roses, and of citron flowers,
Delicious fragrance shed ; majestic palms
Rise o'er Morocco's plain ; the wand'ring clouds,

* Some of the summits of the Atlas exceed 13,000 feet in height, and are covered with perpetual snow.

By giant peaks arrested, lavish forth
Their hidden treasures, and in streams descend
To fertilize the soil. Traveller, haste,
Enjoy the precious moments as they fly,
View nature in her loveliness, for scenes
Far different await thee ! Nations here
Their pyramids of glory rais'd awhile,
And Carthage traded, and the Roman ruled ;
Beneath the Saracen's protecting care
Science was cultured, and the transient light
Of human learning linger'd for a time ;
Nay, Christian faith illumination shed,
And Cyprian suffered, and Augustin toil'd ;
Now utterly extinguished, all its light
Quench'd in barbarian gloom. The plains are
 strew'd

With relics of the past, the ruined sites
Of noble cities, palaces and baths,
And marble pillars, traces of the Greek
Or Punic rule, or where the Latin rear'd
High trophies of his might. Sprung from the
 wreck

Of shatter'd dynasties, the Moor is found
Degenerated heir of nobler times ;
His brow is shaded by the sullen gloom
Of his delusive creed ; the bitter foe
Of Christians and their faith, yet covetous

Of Christian gold, he mann'd his corsair bark,
Dread pirate of the deep, and swept the seas ;
The sombre flag that floated on the gale
Portended death, his glitt'ring sabre smote
All who resistance dar'd ; the hapless few
Who still surviv'd, sad mourners for the loss
Of relatives and home, doom'd to a life
Of tribulation, trembling at the frown
Of an unfeeling master, unsupplied
With necessary food, and harshly task'd
Beyond endurance, pin'd beneath the yoke.
Despairing of redemption, one by one,
Of broken hearts they died, and others came
Heirs of the self-same wretchedness to drain
Th' unfinish'd cup, till England's glorious flag,
That never floats so nobly on the breeze
As when unfurl'd to paralyze the hand
Of harsh injustice, and the weak protect,
Aveng'd these wrongs, and 'neath the wasting fire
Of her majestic ships, the pirates' forts
And bristling lines were levell'd in the dust.
Then many a captive who had once enjoy'd
The blessedness of freedom, the bright shores
Of Italy, his birth-place, treasur'd still
In fond remembrance, friends and well-lov'd home,
The shadowy traces of departed days,
All that remain'd to cheer him as he toil'd

In galling fetters 'neath the harsh rebuke
Of turban'd lords ; who in his gloomy cell
Had wept 'till wearied nature sank to rest,
And dreams of happier hours, of distant friends,
And freedom lost yet wond'rously regain'd,
Came hov'ring o'er his spirit, woke to hear
The triumph of the brave, the loud rebuke
Of cruelty and lust, th' exploding shell
Which thinn'd th' oppressors' ranks, and made the
soul

Of gloomy tyrants tremble, till their hand
Drew back th' unwilling bars and freed the slave,
As Egypt Israel freed, when bitter cries
Rose from a mourning land, and parents wept
The promise of their house, the first-born dead,
And all their hopes laid low.

Not strange indeed,
These harsh developments of Moslem faith ;
More strange if otherwise, for doctrines yield
Congenial fruit, some merciful from heaven
In mercy's deeds delight, some steel the heart,
Foment contention, disconnect the bonds
Of brotherhood, and substitute the scowl
Of bitter hatred for the winning grace
Of true benevolence. The prophet's creed,
Tenacious of its hold, the human heart
Its passions and propensities, the soil

.

From whence it draws support, grows rankly there.
O'ershadowing the mind, it intercepts
The light that heav'n imparts, and sheds around
The gloom of prejudice. Beneath the shade,
So poisonous the influence that it breathes,
No lovely tempers bloom. O'er many a clime,
And nation glorious once, this upas rears
Its giant form, and desolation casts
O'er all the blighted energies of man :
Expansive power is lost.* The rushing tide
Of population shrivels and contracts.
Sepulchral fields and whited tombs that lie
'Neath weeping cypresses alone increase ;

* Few occurrences can evince more clearly a calamitous condition of the human race than habitual diminution of population. One of the first and most powerful laws of our nature, is "increase and multiply." When we, therefore, observe an instinct so imperative frustrated, and the most powerful tendencies of nature turned out of their due course, there can be no doubt that some mighty evil is at work, and such is precisely the case in the Turkish empire. In whatever direction the traveller proceeds, he observes cemeteries crowded with the dead, and if he inquires where are their descendants, no answer can be given. Frequently no town, no village, no cottage, on the borders of the deserted burial-ground, can suggest the reply, these are the children of the deceased.—
Researches in Greece and the Levant, by Rev. J. Hartley.

There by some recent grave the Moslem sits,
Mourning with bitter tears, and plung'd in grief.
Intelligence and industry, the stir
Of active healthful life, the busy sounds
Of thriving man have ceas'd ! depressing gloom—
Time sluggish in its course—the intellect
Stagnant, inactive—life, a stupid dream
Of sensual indulgence—indolence
Predominant o'er all, its sad results
Temples and noble buildings in decay—
The harem, and its hapless inmates doom'd
In wearisome luxuriousness to pass
Their joyless days—and jealousies and strife—
So man deteriorates, the nobler part
Sunk in voluptuousness, indisposed
To high resolve and efforts that improve.
When shall the crescent wane, th' unwholesome
 blight

Of Islam's faith from these fair shores depart,
And Christian churches from their mould'ring ruins,
By pious hands be rais'd ; the pillar'd mosques
No longer echo to the Moslem's pray'r ;
From the white shafted minaret the voice
Of loud Muezzims cease—when better themes
Than cold discourses from the Koran's page,
By Imans coldly utter'd, shall be heard,

And the low-bending worshipper pronounce
Another name, that on the sinner's pray'r
Sheds rich acceptance? Now that glorious name
Is execrated here. The Moslem scorns
A Giaours' faith, repudiates his love,
And Christians aw'd, and fearful to provoke
Intolerance so great, despairing leave
The zealot to his doom. No dauntless hand
Unfurls the snow white banner of the cross
On these deserted shores, no faithful voice
Urges the Saviour's claims—one feeble sound,*
Sole effort of the Church, from Tunis comes,
All else is still, a silence that condemns.
Not thus in polish'd Athens, rich in stores
Of human wisdom but of God devoid,
The senselessness of idols Paul denounc'd ;
Not thus a lowly pris'ner at the foot
Of Cæsar's throne, surrounded by the pomp
Of earthly grandeur, midst the glitt'ring throng,
Alone yet undismay'd, the Apostle stood
In all the fearless majesty of truth,
Confessor of a faith that princes scorned,
And multitudes blasphem'd. The haughty frown
That made the nations tremble, aw'd not him ;

* The Rev. F. C. Ewald, of the Jews' Society, ordained by the Bishop of London, the only Protestant missionary in Northern Africa ; he is stationed at Tunia.

Prepar'd to die its doctrines he avow'd,
And with impassion'd eloquence enforc'd
Its universal claims. So Christians liv'd
Martyrs in spirit, they had rather die
Than purchase base exemption from their pains
By dereliction of their Master's cause.
The cross was then endur'd, not meanly shunn'd ;
They toil'd for Christ, obedient to his word
Intrepidly advanc'd, and found a path
Where access hopeless seem'd. Triumphant thus,
By deeds attested, lives of spotless hue,
And suff'ring deaths most patiently endur'd,
Truth, 'midst contending elements, arose,
Ascendant o'er the prejudice of man.
They mark'd its fruits and felt it was divine :
They saw its high unselfishness, the love,
The self-denying influence that it breath'd,
And own'd it as of God. How chill'd the zeal
That once so nobly suffer'd and prevail'd !
The pilgrim spirit of those earlier days,
Like gems of lustrous hue that as they rise
In preciousness and worth more rare become,
Is scarce indeed. Men wait till dangers cease,
And swelling floods of enmity subside,
And all is safe, unwilling to renounce
The calm indulgence of domestic life,
Appearances suffice, and shadows seem

Strong reasons for delay ; they pause till time,
The clash of carnal weapons, and the strife
Of hostile nations, make the pathway clear ;
And resolute when kings the cause uphold,
Forget that God protects : so Israel's host
Stood trembling at the shore of Jordan's sea,
And deem'd escape impossible,—their faith
Irresolute and weak, when needed most ;
But ere their feet were moistened in the wave,
Th' opposing floods divided, piled on high
Like adamantine walls : thus God ordains
Not timid hesitation ; while we stand
Distrustful of his care, the path is closed ;
Obstructions move not ; but when strong in faith
Christians advance, though storms and foaming

waves

In furious onset rage, then God appears ;
His glorious arm is bared ; the trembling earth
Sinks at his touch ; the lofty mountains melt ;
Through floods of tribulation safely led,
The church her promised conquests shall achieve,
Persuade the heathen, bend the Moslem's pride,
And win the Jew to venerate the name
So long blasphemed.

South of the Atlas range
Less fertile tracts extend. Bled-el-Jereede
The land of dates. The rivulets, which fed

By mountain showers, fall southward from the range,
Caught by the vast Zahara's parching breath
Are soon dried up, or lost in thirsty sands
No irrigation yield. Here Arabs roam,
Tenacious of their fathers' wand'ring life,
In motley groups. Like restless mountain streams
Flung o'er their rocky bed, and brawling still
As obstacles arise, th' impetuous race
Falls from the parent spring. The long jereed*
In folds around his person, the red cap
With pendant tassel decked, his features dark
With the sun's heat, borne on his active steed
The roving Arab, in its distant haunts
Pursues the ostrich, or with sudden charge
Assaults the scatter'd kaffle, as it seeks
Its pathway homeward o'er the desert plain.
How vast this drear expanse ! in ages past
Perhaps an ocean's bed, now parch'd and dry,
A sea of sand, beneath the fiery glare
Of torrid suns expos'd, oft visited
By rushing storms, and clouds of choking dust ;

* On their heads they wear a red cap, which is long enough to hang a little down on one side; from the top of it falls a tassel of blue silk. A wrapper of woollen, from about twenty to twenty-five feet in length, and five or six in breadth, woven rather more compactly than flannel, is wound round the body in folds.

No gushing spring revives, no verdure glads
The wearied trav'ler's eye ; 'tis barren all—
No sustenance for man, nor straggling herb
For famished beast, here vegetates ;—so spread
Thy teeming millions, Africa, dispers'd,
O'er unknown lands, beyond the lunar range
Of mountains, 'till their naked feet are press'd
On thy remotest shore, where beat the waves
Of India's ocean ; vast, and yet of good
Devoid, uncultur'd, unimproved they lie
A moral wilderness—there rankly grow
Briers, and thorny crimes, and deeds of blood ;
An evil energy o'ershades the soil
With forms of vice gigantic, hideous dreams
Of superstition, phantoms that affright,
Stalk fearlessly ; and exhalations rise
Pregnant with death ; no welcome produce there,
No wholesome fruits, the character of man
In rip'ning clusters grace. The Tuarick*
Find in the lonely desert's cheerless depths,
Unenviable haunts, and hence they waste

* The Tuarick appears to be an aboriginal African tribe. They are renowned warriors, and are always at war with the Soudan states, from whom they carry off an immense number of slaves. They seldom make use of horses, and prefer the " Heria" or Desert Camal, which is much better adapted to the purpose.

The Soudan states, and multitudes enslave.
The trembling negroes mark the rising dust
Of the marauder's host, as on the back
Of his swift herie, through these blighted lands
His desolating course he still pursues.
O'er the wide plain in scattered groups are seen
Mothers, and helpless children, and the aged,
Urging their feeble limbs in hopeless flight.
Oh ! miserable regions, where the strong
On the defenceless prey, and each in turn
Becomes the tyrant of some weaker tribe ;
Where mercy, like the wearied dove, in vain
Desires to rest a moment in its flight .
O'er scenes of tribulation such as these.
Across the dreary wilderness, where sands
Shifting before the wind efface the steps
Of other men, the plund'rer's path is seen ;
Bones bleaching in the sun, and sometimes more—
A human skeleton, the fingers clasped
On the bare skull, memorial of the pangs
Intense of death, his cruelty attest.
Unburied they remain, as if the earth
Refus'd to hide them, lest the hideous crime
Which crush'd the slave, might find concealment too.
Oh ! bitter curse of Africa, whose spell
Disrupts each social tie, while nations mourn
The desolation that it leaves behind !

Scourge of the negro race, whose bloody stroke
Sinks deep within the soul, the burning shame
Of all whose hands are sullied with its gain—
Debas'd indeed the man, in conscience sear'd
With dark atrocities, to pity deaf
As the hard rock to the complaining surge,
Who, avaricious of the price of blood,
Greedy of gold, his fellow-man ensnares,
Prosper as others grieve, their tears his wealth,
Content that millions should lament and wail
If he may be enrich'd—who can describe
The groans, and pangs, and waste of human life,
That mark the slave-trade's progress? Oh! how long
Shall the free ocean on its buoyant tide
Bear the deceitful slave-ship, as it steals
To Cuba's shore? When shall the nations rise
To wash the plague-spot from them? When disdain
Participation in this awful crime?
When imitate Britannia, as she freed
The patient negro whose laborious hand
From the rich soil of her Columbian isles
Rais'd luscious harvests?—Kingdoms which profess
The Christian faith, regardless of the pledge
So oft renewed, perfidiously pursue
This costly traffic; human flesh and blood
The health, and life, and liberty of man,
His birthright to be free, and live, and breathe

His native air, and for himself, and God,
His pow'rs employ, as master of himself:
All this, the prized commodity, that bought
And sold brings wealth, the gainful merchant, man,
Of man the merchant, of his brother's right—
For where is right, if man can claim no pow'r
O'er his own person, o'er his hands and feet
To use them as he will, if so his will
With God's intent accords, to Him alone
Responsible?—yet this by man usurp'd,
From God who gives, and him who by the grace
Of that free-gift proprietor becomes,
He dares for gold to barter in the light
Of open day, nor dreads the wrath of Heav'n.
Steel'd against pity, subtle to deceive
The simple native; to the distant shores
Of Africa he steers, and spreads his bait,
Base cutlery, or beads, or the bright glass
More faithful in the image it reflects,
Than conscience of our crimes. The gilded toys,
Worthless themselves, soon fascinate the soul
Of Guinea's sable chief. In vain he brings
His indigo, or rice, or dust of gold;
The mart is one for slaves. The negro's tears
Must furnish forth the sale, and nations weep,
That ev'ry sigh and pang may int'rest bear,
And vice be rich in piles of hoarded gold,

And anguish wrung from one, transmuted thus,
Yield luxury to another. Vers'd in wiles
And dark allurements, obdurate in crime,
The trafficker in blood ignites the train
Of guilty passions, and the work of death
Perfidiously suggests. The Ghrazzie* swells,
In force augmenting, and the livelong night
Pursues it's toilsome way.

'Tis morning's hour,
When the broad sun his ample disk has rear'd
O'er the horizon, and his welcome rays
Are rushing in a flood of glorious light
O'er a rejoicing world, which seems to wake
Refresh'd with slumber, and his advent hail.
Creation, all its energies reviv'd,
Arrays itself in gladness, and attunes
Its matin hymn. All that has life, the birds
Their brilliant plumes arranging for the day,
And 'midst these needful labours uttering forth
Exulting notes—the lowing herds that seek
The pasturage they love, still bath'd in dews,
All animated seem. Man rises too
In pleasure, or in toil, his day to spend,
On various plans intent, and ignorant
What storms may change the aspect of his hour.

* A marauding expedition in search of slaves.

So each successive day its chequer'd store
Of new events distributes, joyous some,
Some steep'd in tribulation—man exults,
Then weeps—so spends his troubled time,
Oft most exulting, with most cause to weep,
While in his hours of grief perchance he sows
Seeds of enduring bliss.

Below is seen,
Reposing on the plain, the negro town.
They dream not of misfortune, hapless race !
Perhaps for years uninjur'd, they have grown
Familiar with security, their days,
Passing in tranquil course, resembling each
Its predecessor. Through the placid air
Climbs the dull smoke, and busy hands within
Arrange the morn's repast ; rejoicing cries
From happy groups of children, as they join
In lively pastime, animates the scene :
But now the tempest bursts—the gloomy clouds
Surcharg'd with war their desolation pour
On the defenceless town—the negro sees
His peaceful hamlet rifled by an horde
Implacable and fierce—in vain his wife
And shrieking children supplicate his aid—
In vain he grasps the spear—in vain essays
To stem the torrent ; crush'd beneath the force
Of numbers irresistible, he finds

All that he loves in bondage to the foe !
Poor injur'd captive ! bitter is the cup
Which he is doom'd to drink, no ray of hope
Breaks through the shadows which obscure his path ;
No messenger of peace, with pitying words,
A brighter world portrays, mansions of bliss
By sorrow undefil'd, from anguish free,
Whose sanctuary attain'd, afflictions cease.
The sinner's refuge, the relief of pray'r,
The weary soul disburthen'd of its load,
And 'neath the rock of ages gently laid
To rest a while—assuagements such as these
Are hidden from his eyes. No friendly hand
Sheds the consoling influence of the truth
O'er his distracted spirit : the sharp spear
Goads him along ; exhausted with fatigue
Prostrate he falls, and death's convulsive gasp
The scene of suff'ring ends—else life preserv'd
Is ling'ring wretchedness—the human herd
Is forc'd with wanton cruelty along,
Their sighs and groans unheeded ; sorrow wastes
The youthful form ; oppression's iron hand
Crushes the soul within, and the strong frame
Bows broken with the spirit ; the eye has lost
Its wonted energy, and man, depriv'd
Of all that made life precious, loathes it now,
And from its bondage struggles to be free.

Emaciated thus, a sickly band,
Survivors of a tribe, approach the stream,
Where, 'midst luxuriant foliage safely screen'd,
The slave-ship waits expectant of her load,
Within whose narrow hold, a noisome cell,
Fetid and dark, scarce fitted to receive
The bales of lawful commerce, but for man
Incarcarated there, most dreaded doom,
The living mass is forc'd, man chain'd to man,
Struggling in vain despair, and crush'd, and bruis'd
By each new effort : madden'd by the want
Of air, and light, and water to relieve
Their raging thirst, in groans and bitter cries
They plead for mercy, and lament their fate.

As journeying onward through some desert tract
Where barrenness prevails, and rocks and sand
Seem endlessly prolong'd, the trav'ler finds
An Eden at his feet—some pleasant spot
Circled by lofty cliffs, whose guardian care
Secludes it from the world—it smiles beneath
In unexpected loveliness—the air
Is fill'd with fragrance, the delicious breath
Of flow'rs, and scented shrubs—thus Africa,
A spiritual waste, where evil reigns
In dread ascendancy o'er boundless realms,
Oft 'midst its deserts an oasis hides,

An island in the solitary waste,
Where vegetation more luxuriant seems,
And, banish'd from the wilderness beyond,
With rich profusion graces its retreat.

This bay how beautiful, its glitt'ring beach
O'erhung with palms and forest trees, that dip
Their branches in the wave, while southward rise,
In gentle undulations from the shore,
Masses of verdant hills, surpassing each
In majesty his fellow, 'till they swell
In lofty mountain heights, the darker hue
Which distance gives, contrasting with the rich
Luxuriant culture of the lower grounds.
There Freetown lies, close by the cooling tide,
A chosen site : the palm tree, and the lime,
With buildings interspers'd, the glist'ning waves
That murmur on the shore, the ships that rest,
Sleeping at anchor, or with tumid sail,
Tracing their wat'ry path—the eye receives
And hails with joy the beauty of the scene.
The liberated negro, here releas'd
From the hard hearted trader's iron grasp,
May find a home where slav'ry is unknown,
Where he is free to breathe the healthful air,
Enjoy the glorious sun, and gladly use
The gifts of God's munificence. Redeem'd

From all restraints, save such as Heav'n enjoins,
He finds a better freedom, to be free
From ignorance and sin, to have the bonds
Of an unholy nature from his soul
Remov'd, and liberty of access gain
To mercy's throne. Most honourable task,
Redemption of the slave ! illustrious toil !
To loose the galling fetters from the limbs
Of the poor captive, and his wrongs redress—
When on the guilty bark that vainly seeks
To shun the seaman's glance—her snow-white sails
Fill'd with propitious breezes, and her flag
Floating on high, the British cruiser gains,
All hands aloft—all eager for the chase—
A prize—a slave-ship—from the tow'ring yards
She flings a spread of canvass to the winds,
And emulates their speed—the briny wave,
Cut by her rapid keel, is white with foam,
And from her deck are heard the hearty cheers
Of Albion's sons. In vain the pirate tries
His wonted stratagems, and longs for night
To wrap him in its shades—the shotted gun
With peremptory summons stays his flight—
The hatches are unclos'd—from the dark hold
Where, light and air excluded, death had long
Prey'd on the stifling mass, the seaman's hand
Raises each fainting victim, and the breeze,

Fresh from the healthful ocean, life restores.
Yet there's a nobler privilege—to loose
The bondage of the soul, and break away
The fetters of its lusts—with earnest love
To raise the sinner from the loathsome pit
Of vicious habits, and pronounce him free—
To minister for Christ, and aid his work,
The liberation of a fallen race
From sin's oppressive yoke—'tis Heav'n's high task,
Worthy of man's best energies, and life
On this bestow'd, is life expended well.

Land, on whose shores the slave no sooner plants
His foot than he is free, whose atmosphere
The bondsman cannot breathe, whose happy soil
Has liberation in its very touch,
Be thine the glorious privilege to teach
Those whom thy lavish'd treasures have releas'd
From earthly bondage, of superior gifts,
Of a more costly ransom—guide their thoughts
To One who has redeem'd them, not with gold
Or perishable dust ; a higher price
Was requisite to emancipate the soul ;
Tell thine adopted children of his love,
Who in affliction bought us with his blood,
And died that we may live, and gave his life
A substitute for ours—complete the task

So happily commenc'd ; and when thine hand
Removes each chain, these objects of thy care
Abandon not, with blessings to pervert,
Whose worth they know not, ignorant to improve,
As freemen ought, the privilege bestow'd ;
Without a principle to guide their path
'Midst an ensnaring world, devoid of strength
To curb their nature, or its lusts control,
Lest, freed from man's dominion, they remain
In bondage to themselves, and live the prey
Of more dishonourable servitude.

Freedom is good, if while the limbs are free
The soul enjoys true freedom ; if redeem'd
From sin's vile yoke, and the degrading bonds
Of ruinous propensities, it aims
At noblest ends, and, sanctified by grace,
Moves as possessing liberty of good—
Lives as for God, each energy directs
Obedient to his will, and yields the frame
In grateful service to its rightful Lord.
The liberated Christian, he who wears
The yoke of Christ, is free ; all else are slaves,
Their captive state more hopeless, as of choice,
The slav'ry of the will. The man who scorns
All other bonds, these fetters of the mind
Contentedly endures ; the specious name

Of liberty he honours, deems it vile
To bend submissive to a tyrant's laws,
Proclaims it better on th' embattled field
To die a freeman than survive a slave ;
Yet in the deep recesses of his soul,
Feeble in purpose, impotent to break
The spell of guilty pleasure, meanly bows
In degradation to his tyrant sin.

And thou, first effort from our English homes
To plant our English blessings on these shores,
Freedom, and social order, and the peace
Which each returning sabbath loves to yield,
To win the untutor'd negro from the spell
Of senseless superstitions, shadowing forth
Mysterious ills, and portents that affright,
In pray'r commenced, be perfected in praise.
Let christian perseverance crown the task
By faith begun. 'Twere ominous indeed
For England's welfare to desert thee now.
Tis sacred ground ; th' imperishable names
Of self-denying men, in patient toil
The parching influence of this torrid clime
Enduring, 'till decay their days curtail'd,
And brought them to their grave, are written here,
Their recollections blending with the claims
Of Afric's infant churches, and the voice

Of many a faithful martyr to the cause,
Ascends from sculptur'd stone, and humbler grave
Beneath the palm-tree's shade, or the deep sea
Beneath whose waste of waters rest the bones
Of Johnson and of During*—they would plead
The negro's cause—their name, their suffering life
Blighted before its prime, their hopes and fears,
The seed they scatter'd and the pray'rs they breath'd,
Rebuke the selfishness of such as doubt
If souls are worth expenditure of life,
Souls for whom Jesus died. No hazard daunts
Adenturous man, when objects that he deems
Worthy his aspiration prompt the risk.
Through the wide sea, 'midst storm and rushing
 wave,
He steers his fragile bark, intent on gain,
Amidst the battle's roar, the deafning crash
Of mass on mass, in deadly strife impell'd,
Seeks reputation, or in deep research,
Through midnight hours prolong'd, consumes the oil
Of precious life, those healthful energies,

* Two amongst the many of our devoted Sierra Leone missionaries, who rest from their labours, and whose names are written on high. Johnson died at sea, in May 1822. During, with his wife, sailed from Sierra Leone in August, 1823, and were never heard of more. Their labours at Sierra Leone are well worth perusal.

Which lost so few regain. Thus man pursues
His perishable prize, some poor reward,
Which, like the schoolboy's bubble, breaks when
touch'd.

But here are nobler objects, glorious toils
Worthy of God himself, of him who stoop'd
From heav'n's high throne, on labours such as these
His human life to spend. He points the way,
The path where lasting honour may be won,
And deeds consummated whose high results
Shall live immortalized, when all that man
With admiration views, his pride, and pow'r,
Have pass'd away, when the huge earth itself
Shall sink in flames, the firmament above
Melt and dissolve, and all material things,
Refashion'd by Omnipotence, assume
Another form—amidst this wreck and change,
The spirits of the just, like glorious stars,
Transcendently shall shine,—high privilege
To labour for eternity, by pray'r
Or faithful words, as instruments to serve
In efforts thus magnificently grand.
Immortal and imperishable things ;
Of high attainments capable, rich gems
Tho' cover'd with pollution, yet when cleans'd
From evil incrustations, meet to form

A diadem of glory,—these to save
From evil, and unutterable woe,
And all that's doom'd, as reprobate and vile,
To perish and decay ; can earth unfold
Objects sublime as these ? man's loftiest aims,
The master mind that regulates the tide
Of national affairs, and wisely seeks
Their rapid fluctuations to repress,
The warrior's skill, the eloquence that glows,
All that from earth-born impulses deriv'd
Sink back on earth, nor sprung from nobler views,
Soar upward, their identity to claim
With things invisible, are trac'd in dust,
And in the records of a better world
Shall find no place ; while undistinguish'd names,
And deeds by men despis'd, shall brighten there !
To toil for God, to suffer in his cause,
True dignity ensures, and one stray soul,
Rescu'd from sin, from utter loss redeem'd,
Is recompense indeed for transient hours
Of light affliction here.

'Tis true the Lord

On these far shores, the patience of his church
Tries by repeated exercise, his face
'Oft hidden in the gloom of dark events
Mysteriously ordained, his hand withholds

The blessings we would crave ; remorseless death
Thins the devoted band, removing oft
From op'ning fields of usefulness, the man
Whose presence seem'd most needful—when the
work

Brighten'd with promise, and attentive crowds
Hung on his glowing words, and sinners touch'd
With sorrow for the past, desir'd to know
Where they might healing find, and Christians hop'd
That Africa would soon her hands extend
In supplication, his mysterious will
Whose ways are in the sea, whose paths are hid
In deepest waters, to the courts above
His servant call'd, and left the weeping flock
Without a shepherd. Shall the church relax
In hopelessness her task ? has mercy fail'd,
Or is his promise gone ? has God shut up
His tenderness in anger ? nay, let faith,
Amidst these seeming hindrances, behold
A blessing in reserve, one by delay
In costliness increasing, like the cloud
Which rose in answer to the prophet's pray'r,
Small as the hand, at first, and scarcely seen
In the blue firmament, but filling soon
Th' expanse of heav'n, and its refreshing floods
Expending on the thirsty plain beneath ;
And God withdraws himself, that we may seek

His face in prayer, like Jacob, when of old
He strove in earnest conflict and prevail'd.
'Tis faith on eagle's wings to seek the skies,
To rise o'er earthly obstacles, and hope
When all seems hopeless, when the prospect frowns
With dark discouragement, and sudden gloom
O'ercasts the scene, unterrified to hold
Its purpose firm, and patiently await
Till clouds disperse, and all is bright again.
As Noah when the faithful dove return'd,
Bearing the olive leaf, most welcome sign
Of a subsiding deluge, from the ark
Descending, view'd the renovated world
And found himself its heir, so faith outlives
The cloudy day, and when the painful time
Of discipline is pass'd, receives the prize.
'Twill yet productive prove, this chosen spot,
Object of cherish'd hopes, where precious truth
Has long been sown, and show'rs of plenteous tears,
Nay life itself, expended on its growth—
And as the treasur'd corn, the fruitful seed
Of future crops, without increase remains,
Its germinating energy conceal'd,
Till lost amidst the soil interr'd it dies,
Thus, life less valued than the Saviour's cause
And man's salvation in its death becomes
Productive most—the buried saints which lie .

On these far shores, in bright example live ;
Their toils survive : their deathless mem'ry yields
New motives to exertion ; on the hills
Which once they travers'd, midst these mountain vales
And village churches were their voice proclaim'd
Glad tidings of salvation, harvests rich
In righteousness and truth, of golden hue,
Shall amply wave—fill'd with the bread of life
For famish'd multitudes, the distant home
Of the poor exil'd African, shall prove,
Like Joseph's well-fill'd granaries, a store
Of blessing to the needy, and the stream
Of life and health, that with predicted pow'r
Shall fertilize these wilds, its source derive
From this long-cherish'd colony, the home
And refuge of the liberated slave.
From these poor huts, a rivulet of life
Shall yet well forth, the wilderness to cheer,
And bearing on its bank's umbrageous trees,
Charg'd with delicious fruit, and leaves design'd
The African to heal.

Collected here,
Fragments of various tribes, combine to form
A varied population, friends and foes
In brotherhood conjoin'd. Afflictions serve,
Like the hot crucible where metals fuse,
To melt discordant particles, till strife

And bitter animosities forgotten,
The mass is cast anew. Far distant here
The mountain tracts and valleys where he led
Alternately his flocks, the Foulah finds*
A substitute for home and kinsfolk lost,
And dwells securely. From the Gambia's banks,
Where fetish rites prevail, the Yaloof comes,
Of negro origin, with jet black skin,

* The Foulaha, in form and features, are distinct from the Negro tribes. Their complexion is more of an olive, their hair long and silky, they have thin faces, with small high features and an agreeable expression.

The Yaloofs or Onaloffs occupy the greatest part of the country between the lower parts of the Senegal and Gambia. They are considered the handsomest negroes in this part of Africa. The Mandingoes are the most numerous race of Negroes in these regions, and are spread along the banks of the Niger, the Senegal and Gambia. They are active in proselyting to Mohammedanism, the Timmanees, who formerly lived at a distance from the sea coast, but being of a warlike and active disposition, they forced themselves down the river of Sierra Leone, among the Bulloma. A mission has just been established amongst them by the Church Missionary Society. The Bulloms live on the north side of the Sierra Leone river. The Bassas live about 400 miles below Sierra Leone, at the southern extremity of Liberia: there are American missionaries labouring amongst this tribe. The Greeboes in the same direction: American missionaries who had been amongst the Zoolahs are at work there.

And hair short curling. The Mandingoo race,
The Soosoo from the Rio Ponga's stream,
The Timmanee proverbially deprav'd,
Within whose woods a dread fraternity,
The gloomy Purrah, hides its mystic rites,
The Bullom wand'ring from his native shore
In voluntary exile, doom'd to drink
The calabash of poison, or confess
A crime he never knew. Kroomen of quick
And enterprising tempers ; and more south
From Guinea's coast, th' Ashantee's warlike race,
With scenes of blood familiar, when the wretch
Doom'd by a cruel despot's harsh decree
To ling'ring tortures, from his mangled frame
Pours forth the crimson tide, and monarchs shed
Libations, from the veins of men express'd,
On their ancestral graves : there barb'rous pomp,
In gold and silver lavishly profuse,
Displays its rude magnificence, and bursts
Of martial music mingling with the shouts
Of frenzied multitudes, the bitter cries
Of human suff'ring drown. Thus broken off
By rude oppression's force, a mingled race,
From Yarriba and Kissi, and the banks
Of the wide Quorra or the Tchadda's stream,
Bambouk where gold abounds the priz'd Peru
Of western Africa, and Bondou's realm,

Akus, and Bassas, and the Greboo tribe,
Outcasts from home, they find protection here,
Till twice redeem'd, impatient to declare
Salvation's hope, by Christian zeal constrain'd,
That only lives while suffer'd in the heart
To find expansion, of their former friends
Considerate, they trace their pathway home,
Eastward or south or north as love directs.*
O'er the Nigritian continent dispers'd,
Skill'd in its thousand tongues, inur'd to climes,

* The Rev. F. Bultman, church missionary at Kent in Sierra Leone, in his report for the quarter ending Dec. 1840, writes—
“ Not a few of the people are sincere inquirers after truth, and there are others of established christian character, who I can confidently affirm have imbibed the spirit, and exercise the principles, of the Gospel. Some few, with unquestionable sincerity, have expressed their ardent desire to proclaim the wonders of a Saviour's love to their benighted countrymen. Indeed, one of the communicants declared to me last night, that next to seeing and speaking to his own parents, who most probably were not alive, his principal motive for wishing to go back to his country, was to see the man who first tied the chain about his neck and sold him as a slave, and to tell him that he had not only no malice whatever in his heart against him, but that for the infinite good which he had by that cruel act unwittingly entailed upon him, he had come to return him his warmest thanks, and would do all in his power to make him enjoy those blessings which had been, through God's mercy, conferred upon himself.

Where the white strangers bloom, like flow'rs ex-
pos'd

To the hot furnace, droops and with'ring dies,
These messengers of peace shall access find
To distant lands in pagan darkness veil'd,
Mysterious wilds, an amplitude of space,
Nameless, unknown, unvisited as yet,
By European enterprize, a depth
Impervious to the glance of curious man,
Though oft imagination wings its flight,
And hovers o'er the scene, and vainly tries
To pierce the gloom, and catch some transient
glimpse
Of hidden life below.

Man's purposes

Are oft defeated, disappointments come
Subversive of our plans, like show'rs of hail,
Unseasonable, when th' unfolding year,
Emerging from the winter's sullen reign,
Arrays itself in verdure, and the fields
Are rich with promise. On the furious blast
Volumes of clouds advancing, frown afar
With threat'ning aspect, and the heav'ns obscure.
The sunny hour is gone, one fearful crash
Rends the dark mass, and on the plains beneath,
Sad devastation pours, and ruin'd crops,

Vines of their leaves denuded, the embryo germ
Of future harvests utterly destroy'd,
Its blighting progress mark.

On the broad tide
Of the majestic Thames, the ships repose,
Their destination "Africa." The pulse
Of popular excitement rises high,
And multitudes admire, and princes add
Their tribute of applause. No enterprise
More worthy of exertion e'er engaged
A nation's noblest energies, and prayers
And earnest aspirations for success
Ascend to heav'n, as from their anchors freed,
Obedient to the impulsive force within,
They ply the circling wheels, and onward move.
From the mann'd yards the farewell cheer is heard,
From many a lip breath'd forth that now is seal'd
In the still sleep of death, and gen'rous thoughts
Of benefits bestow'd on suff'ring man,
And soothing hopes of country and of friends
Regain'd, are mingled with the deep regrets
That separation brings. For who can part
From England's coast and all that lingers there,
Without at least a momentary shade
Of sadness on the mind, a passing thought
That dims the eye, and makes more indistinct

The fading outline of her well known shores,
While recollection, with mysterious pow'r,
Recalls the traces of our earlier days,
Kindred and home, our sorrows and our joys,
Nor feel uncertain if the past shall live
Renew'd in the bright future, when the sounds
Of welcome from assembled friends shall greet
The wanderer restor'd? All that we love,
In separation more endearing seems,
More worthy to be lov'd. 'Tis then the mind
With fond remembrance lingers on the past,
And thinks it o'er again, and sheds a hue
Of sorrowful affection o'er the dream.
The little inequalities of life,
That make uneven our most tranquil hour,
Are all forgotten in the soft'ning touch
That distance seems to give. But thoughts like
these
Unman the soul, and present duties urge.
The past is gone, the future is with God.
' Unfurl the sail, and let the fresh'ning breeze
Its willing aid impart to waft us on.
For Africa we steer, where groans the slave,
And human victims mourn ; we haste to bring
Alleviations to this land of woe.
Our gallant barks are light, our hearts resolv'd,
Our hopes, our confidence on high. We aim

At no encroachment on the natives right,
No sordid lust of acquisition lurks
Conceal'd beneath the plausible pretence
Of love to man. The conquests we would win
Are conquests o'er his miseries. Our arms,
Persuasion, loving kindness, faithful words
Of righteousness and truth. Each inland stream
Shall yield us access to the Negro's home.
The mystic Niger, from the curious eyes
Of enterprising trav'lers long conceal'd,
Waits to receive us, where in Guinea's gulph
It mingles with the ocean, on its tide,
Prepar'd to raise us to the gloomy haunts
From whence the slave-trade springs. Then brace
each nerve

With firm resolve, and let the consciousness
That rectitude of purpose ever brings,
Invigorate our hopes. "England expects
Each man to do his duty;"—onward then,
That duty is before us, and beyond
A bright reward is seen, the recompense
Of an approving conscience—or if death
Awaits us on these shores, and all our hopes
Are doom'd to disappointment—better far
In honourable usefulness to die,
Than linger on unprofitable years

Of indolence at home.'

Thus ev'ry heart
Was fill'd with expectation, eager hope,
Temper'd with wise remembrance, that our plans
Are subject to reverse tho' well arrang'd.
Soon other climes receive them. From above
With overpow'ring lustre glows the sun,
The languid breeze no cooling influence yields,
And lassitude ensues. Along these banks
And marshy beds where vegetation grows
In tropical luxuriance, those dark creeks,
With matted boughs o'erhung, in jungles lost,
Those stagnant pools by inundations left,
There lurks the dread malaria, brooding o'er
The surface of the waters, charg'd with death.
A pestilential vapour taints the air,
An evil imperceptible to sense,
Yet suddenly imbib'd. With sullen weight
It presses on the principle of life,
In vain the vital flame essays to burn,
A subtle poison chills it, and it dies.

Why rest those ships so idly on the tide?
Or else with feeble effort scarce prevail
Their progress to pursue? No storms impede—
The glassy surface of th' extended stream,
Smooth'd like a mirror, woos them to the task.

Nigritia's chieftains welcome their approach,
Their friendship prize, and with persuasive words
Entreat their Christian countrymen to stay
And teach them all they know. The land appears
Op'ning before them—distant tribes have heard
The tidings of their advent, and await
The stranger barks impatiently. Why seem
Those gallant ships so still? No busy hands
Arrange the pendant rigging. No loud voice
Of vigilant authority awakes
The sailors' willing aid. The weary wheels
With vacillating movement scarcely stem
The influence of the waters, as they seek
Their kindred ocean—all so silent seems,
So strangely, so mysteriously inert.
Thus sink the noblest energies of man,
By mortal sickness paralys'd, his thoughts
And high intents exchange'd for fev'rish dreams
And hours of sad delirium. On that bed
Of suff'ring and disease, in all the prime
Of promise and intelligence and life,
Crush'd by the fell malaria's giant pow'r,
The father lies, whose name is daily breath'd
By infant lips at home, the husband too
With tears relinquish'd, and in absence still
Most faithfully remember'd; the lov'd son
A mother's consolation, there he waits,

His eyes averted from the painful light,
Till God adjusts the balance, and decides
His restoration or lamented death.

Rest there, intrepid men, repose awhile
On those far shores, not unlamented here.
A gen'rous nation never will withhold
The tribute of its sympathy, nor leave
Widows and helpless orphans to lament
In poverty their loss, the sudden fall
Of ev'ry earthly hope. We too shall die,
Fade like the leaf, and generations pass
Swept by the wind away, his death most blest
Who lives as not his own, and bears his cross
In patient resignation—sleep awhile,
Another morn shall come, when death subdued,
Its conquests shall surrender, and the grave
And ocean's dark abyss resign their spoils.

Thus God instruction yields, the lesson oft
By sad yet needful discipline enforc'd.
We claim to be monopolists of good,
And think that English energies suffice
For ev'ry task ; but God reproves the hope,
And bids us, as essential to success,
Employ the aid that other men can give.
Co-operation willingly received

From all of ev'ry cast, from all who claim
The Saviour as their Lord—'tis this we need,
Convinc'd that God meet instruments can find
In ev'ry tribe, and mould them to fulfil
His purposes of love, our prejudice
Contemptible to him whose eyes regard
The spirit of the man and not his hue.
From the rude mass omnipotence can form
The polish'd shaft, that wing'd with holy zeal,
True to its aim when by his hand discharg'd,
With penetrative light pursues its course.
The spark of high intelligence within
That seem'd extinct, so brutaliz'd the man,
Rekindling at the touch of heav'nly light
Wakes from its torpid state, and beaming forth
Its dormant pow'r displays. The Indian pleads,
With glowing imag'ry, his Master's cause,
And negroes, whose affinity with man
Philosophers have doubted, prove their claims
As heirs of immortality, by deeds
Of high devotedness, that would not shame
An European brow. Thus God prepares
A native agency, that when the toil
Too burdensome becomes, with welcome aid
The fainting European may sustain,
And execute the plans which he conceives.
Success shall crown such efforts, sickness fail

Their progress to delay. The gallant ship
Mann'd by a native crew, her circling wheels
Conflicting with the tide, shall mount the streams
Where England's sons, their energies subdued,
In quick succession fell, till scarcely one
Remain'd to guide the vessel in its flight
From the dread pestilence. The tribes which raise
Their mud-built towns along these wooded banks,
From native lips shall glorious tidings hear
In well-known accents cloth'd, and wond'ring raise
Their eyes to heav'n, and gratefully adore,
As mercy's message like refreshing rain
Falls on the willing ear, and glads the heart.
Then shall the slave-trade perish, by its roots
Uptorn and prostrate laid, and nations hail
Its extirpation, and rejoice to see
The giant evil levell'd in the dust.
Then shall our toils be crown'd with glorious fruits,
And hours of gladness come, predicted long,
And all those hopes be realized, that fill'd
The soul of honour'd Wilberforce, when girt
With courage for the task, he rose to plead
The friendless negro's disregarded cause,
And all his wrongs indignantly proclaim'd.
The fabric he commenc'd, his master hand
Laid the foundation stone, he laid it sure
Bas'd on the rock, and ev'ry day beholds

Its progress to perfection. On its front
The conquests won o'er prejudice and pride,
And organized injustice, and the love
Of treasur'd gold, are legibly inscrib'd ;
And names of honour'd men are written there,
Clarkson and Granville Sharp, and more besides,
A noble band, who deem'd it no disgrace
To sympathize with Africa, and yield
Assistance to her children in distress.

Nor is it only 'midst these western tribes,
The Gospel vindicates its pow'r to save—
To change the savage, and his life reclaim
From evil habits. On the southern shore,
Where its majestic promontory tow'rs
O'er the tempestuous waves, which chafe and fret,
And fling their angry surge in deaf'ning roar
On the resisting rocks, and then dispers'd
In show'rs of spray, sink back amidst a mass
Of foaming waters, and the strife renew,
Nations and wand'ring clans, *the Fingoo race,
The Hottentot and Caffre, from the stream
Of living waters, satisfy their thirst.
Reiterated wrongs, from men receiv'd

* The Fingoes—a people emancipated from amongst the Caffres, at the termination of the late Caffre war. Many of them have received the gospel.

Who bore the name of Christian, but whose lives
Misrepresented Christ—whose feet were swift
To deeds of savage vengeance, indispos'd
The heathen to communion with a race
So full of inhumanity. They shunn'd
The stranger as their foe, they deem'd his heart
To pity inaccessible, and fled
His presence, as they fly some loathsome thing,
And dangerous withal. That kindly words
Could grace the white man's lips, of this they seem'd
Incredulous indeed, and thought the sand
Of the parch'd desert might as quickly yield
The rich aroma of the shelter'd vale
Where rivulets abound. Not wondrous this
Where force had been a law, and pow'r usurp'd
The rights of others, and the lust of gain
Excus'd each wrong, and harsh intruders play'd
The tyrant's part amongst these helpless tribes,
Despoil'd them of their herds, and still intent
On wider acquisition, drove them back
By sword and rifle from their native fields,
Till, exiled from their homes, bereav'd of all
They deem'd most precious, they were left to tread
The lonely plains of arid clay which stretch
Behind the Swartzberg range. Then stung by sense
Of injuries receiv'd, by wrongs provok'd,
The once enduring African became

A lawless plund'rer ; startled from his mild
And inoffensive nature, he assum'd
Ferocious habits, practis'd, where he dar'd,
Retaliation, and his hands defil'd
With many a victim. Darker shades of crime
His character obscur'd, and vengeance wing'd
His assegay, as with unerring aim
He smote th' unwary colonist. The fire,
Long smould'ring in his breast, glares wildly forth.
The deadly strife begins—in dusky hordes
They pass the frontier line, the wasteful flame
Betokens their approach ; the settlers fly ;
Their quiet homes, their cultivated farms
And growing crops, the promise of the year,
All prostrate laid ; as when a sound is heard
Like billows on the shore, and locusts come
Innumerable hosts, the gloomy mass
Dark'ning the heavens, and the trembling earth
Spoiling of verdure—hark ! the trumpet sounds
The wild alarm is spread, the smoke ascends
Of burning villages, and fearful tales
Of many a murder'd colonist arrive.
With indiscriminating vengeance fir'd,
The blameless and the guilty fall alike
Before the Caffre's spear, and widows weep
And orphans mourn the carnage they survive.
When shall contention cease, and wars that come

Like some bewild'ring tempest, as it sweeps
In furious gusts along, be hush'd to rest ?
When shall the native owner of the soil,
The wild Australian, or the wand'ring tribes
Of the Red Indians, or New Zealand's race,
Remain uninjur'd, and no longer shun
The white man's advent, as the dreaded sign
Of future extirpation—when derive
Blessings, as from a benefactor's hand,
Nor perish, as if blighted by his touch ?
A native population once possess'd
This irrigated tract, these streams and banks ;
Their cattle pastur'd here, and joyous bands
Of children issued forth ?—now all is chang'd,
Exterminated, gone—they meet no more
The stranger's eye—the verdant branch is lopp'd,
The white man has not spar'd, the very stock
Uprooted from the soil. Shall tribe by tribe,
Each pristine race progressively decay,
Wasted by war, and vices, and disease
By heartless Europeans introduc'd,
Their very name forgotten, where they roam'd
Proprietors of all ; their graves and bones,
As crush'd beneath the white man's lordly step
They crumble into dust, sole evidence
That they had ever been ? Shall Britain rear
A fabric of dominion, gorgeous, vast,

Yet founded on injustice, bas'd on wrongs,
And human sorrow, and a waste of life,
And nations, as they touch th' expanding bounds
Of her superior influence, disappear,
Like some doom'd vessel in the dread embrace
Of the gigantic maelstrom, as it roars
On Norway's coast, when struggling to be free,
Yet spell-bound, powerless, hopelessly ensnar'd
Midst rushing tides, and currents that increase
In strength and rapid suction, as they near
The central vortex, charg'd with precious life,
It onward bears, in the vast gulf absorb'd,
And crush'd, and broken, on the rocks beneath?
Or like the mountain torrent, which had roll'd
In overwhelming floods, from lake and glen,
Swell'd by the mountain snows; but shrivell'd now,
Its force exhausted, by the fervid heat
Of summer suns absorb'd, amidst the stones
Of the sunk channel, it conceals its course.
Shall nations that had once in floods of life
Pour'd o'er their native lands, and hill and plain
With stirring thousands fill'd, diminish thus,
Wasted and parch'd, when European pow'r
Becomes ascendant on their native shore,
Till an enfeebled remnant, scarcely seen
Amidst the increasing multitudes that come
To colonize the soil, drags tamely on

Its miserable life, degraded, poor,
And hasting to extinction. Welcome dawn
Of a new era, when impartial laws
Shall shield the native's right, and guard his home
From violation—when the Hottentot,
The Griqua, and the Caffre, shall enjoy
The fostering care of Britain, and improve
'Neath her protecting shade, and have their names
Enroll'd among her sons, and look to her
As to their common parent, when the word
Of gospel truth, unfetter'd in its course,
Shall yield rich blessings to a needy world.
The Zooloh race, wean'd from the love of war,
Exchange their burnish'd collars for the yoke
Of the meek Jesus, prize his grace and truth
As more enduring ornaments—renounce
The sword and spear, and cast their shields away ;
The Mantatees, the Bechuana tribe,
Corannas, and Bojesmans, all the shades
Of sable man, that o'er the vast extent
Of undiscover'd regions densely spread,
A restless ocean, where in constant change,
Ashuman passions rise, attract, repel,
They ebb and flow, submissive to His word
Who stills contending elements, and calms
The tempest at its height, shall sink to rest,
The rush of angry waves, the furious swell

Of endless tumults hush'd, till in the smooth
And placid mirror, universal peace
Reflected shines.

The records of the past
Are pungent with reproach. The day has been
When the degraded Hottentot was class'd
As an inferior race, design'd to serve,
And be the white man's slave. Despis'd and scorn'd,
And deem'd as worthless, in the sight of God,
As in his master's eye, none stoop'd to teach.
To serve was his, and ignominious blows,
And ignorance, the wages he receiv'd.
His soul—none seem'd to think an abject slave
Was worthy of a soul, but like the brutes
To die, and be extinct, his likely doom.
With man's injurious tendency to learn
All that is evil, while the better traits
Are indistinctly seen, he soon imbib'd
The vices of the strangers, and their crimes
And evil habits grafted on his own,
Till, brutaliz'd and sunk, his mournful case
Seem'd one of hopeless wretchedness, and men
Who saw in his deteriorated state
Their own reproach, condemn'd him for the same,
And call'd him outcast, dog; and he had died
Without commiseration, and the sword
And vengeful rifle mark'd him as their prey,

And future ages heard of him as one
Of kindness unsusceptible, and best
As noxious to destroy ; but God vouchsaf'd
A remnant to preserve, and friends arose
To feel his bitter wrongs, and plead his cause,
And missionaries came to test the pow'r
Of gospel truth, and try what love could do.

He was alone, who first essay'd to teach
The poor despair'd-of Hottentot, consign'd
To suffer'ing and neglect. No friend was near
To help him in the task, and share the heat
And burden of the day. In Bavian's kloof
He rear'd his humble cottage, and enclos'd
His garden, and in patient hope commenc'd
To teach the wond'ring natives, who soon came,
Clad in the vile kaross, to see a man,
A white man too, who call'd himself their friend.
God bless'd his simple labours, they were done
In earnestness of spirit, and the pow'r
Of heav'nly influence rested on his word ;
And tears of sorrow trickl'd down the cheeks
Of these poor wand'ring outcasts, as they heard
Of one who sorrow'd in his love for man,
Oppress'd like them, rejected and despis'd.
The human heart, that hardens to the stroke
Of rough oppression, and will sooner break

Than tamely bend, melts to the touch of love,
The voice of mercy penetrates the ear ;
The sympathy of Him who felt the woes
Of others so intensely, that he took
Their sorrows on himself, attracts and wins
The sinner, and his stony heart subdues.
The faithful man was cheer'd—the seed he cast
Was quick'ning in the heart, and many came,
Burden'd with sad convictions, to demand
Where rest was to be found : he saw the fields
Whit'ning with promise, and he long'd for some
To gather in the harvest. From his flock
He parted with regret,* he hop'd the time
Of absence would be short, and many a tear
Was shed, when they were left like helpless sheep
'Midst the vast wilderness, none near save God ;
And patiently they watch'd, and long'd to see
His face once more, and to their promise true,
With each returning sabbath, met to sing

* Geo. Schmidt, the first christian teacher to the Hottentot tribe, commenced his labours in the year 1736, and after some time, being induced to return to Europe, in the hope of obtaining assistance in his important work, was harshly detained by the Dutch authorities, and refused permission to return. On the resumption of the mission in 1792, the pear tree which he had planted, owing to its vast size, served the brethren for a school and church.

And pray; and tedious months and years elaps'd,
And sadness came, but he for whom they long'd
Came not—yet strong desire surviv'd their hope,
And kept them waiting still. As 'midst the frost,
And dreary winter of the chilling north,
Man waits with fond anxiety to catch
The first faint blush of the returning sun,
Thus wearied of the night, they long'd for day.
And time pass'd on, a lengthened interval;
The little flock was scatter'd—some had died,
And others, none to guide them, stray'd away.
A few remain'd, who, mindful of the past,
Cherish'd the dying embers, and preserv'd
Some life within, and labour'd to recal
Traces of those sweet words, that us'd to sound
So full of consolation, but which time,
That wears the stone, and from the marble slab
The deep inscription blots, was stealing fast
From mem'ry's tablet. Though the jealous hand
Of harsh authority had interpos'd,
And stay'd him from those lone ones, yet they liv'd
Undying in his heart; and fervent prayers,
Pray'rs from a bended knee, and anguish'd soul,
Unwearied pray'rs, that fail'd not, rose on high—
They rose to God, to Him who caus'd the rocks
To gush with streams, and dews of manna shed
His chosen to sustain—his aid he sought.

As when the Shunammite's dead son was laid
A lifeless burden on the prophet's bed,
A beauteous flower in op'ning youth cut down,
E'er time bestow'd maturity—he came,
The man of God ; his inmost soul was griev'd.
The Lord had done it ; and alone with him
Who kills and makes alive, he utter'd forth
His strong desires, and on the pallid corpse
Extended, from the frozen heart essay'd
To melt away the chilliness of death,
Till life, in genial currents through the veins
Resumed its course, and to the clay-cold limbs
The glow of health restor'd. Thus God reviv'd
This long-suspended mission. Years had pass'd,
Some fifty, and the hopes once kindled there
Seemed utterly extinguish'd, but his breath
Resuscitated life, his hand led forth
New lab'ers to his work, and to the spot
Where the Moravian teacher cast his seed,
Their steps directed ; the lone hut which once
Had been his home, in ruins might be trac'd,
His garden, and the tree, a stripling once
When planted by his care, its ample boughs
Spread largely forth, 'neath whose refreshing shade
The sable flock assembled. One there was,
Bow'd with protracted years, who still retain'd
Remembrance of the truths so dearly prized,

Ling'ring, midst much decrepitude on earth,
As if her soul, unwilling to depart,
Waited to be refresh'd ; and as she brought
With trembling haste the book, which once receiv'd,
A parting token from her teacher's hand,
Wrapp'd in protecting skins, with sacred care
Had day by day been treasur'd, she appear'd
A relic of the past, just spar'd to show
That God had blessed his word, and still would deign
New blessings to confer ; and Bavian's kloof
Is now the " vale of grace." A seedling plant
When first set there, yet nourished from on high,
This humble effort of a faithful man
Grows to a giant tree, the parent stem
Of many a kindred mission ; 'neath its shade
The Hottentot reposes ; there he finds
A resting place, and of its wholesome fruit
Abundantly partakes. Array'd no more
In the disgusting sheep-skin, he appears
Christian in temper, and in mind a man,
Cleans'd from the accumulated rust which years
Of long neglect entail'd ; his intellect
Susceptible of polish, yet shall vie
In point and temper with the boasted skill
And finished hue of European minds.
The stranger wand'ring through these southern wilds
Is gladdened if he nears the mission homes

Of Bethelsdorp or Gnadenthal.* The pow'r
Of the Redeemer's cross is there display'd.
In civilized communities dispos'd,
The once neglected native may be seen
Industrious and patient of those ills
Which mark our pathway here. He lives by faith,
And seeks a better country in the skies.
Thankful for all the blessings God has giv'n,
In unpretending holiness of life
He serves his generation, and awaits
The long-expected moment, when the Lord
Shall call his servant home. Beneath the shade,
By man unnotic'd, all its graces hid
From observation, many a modest flow'r
Reserves its sweetness for the eye of God ;
Blooming for him alone, its hiding place
A lowly temper, shrinking from the gaze
Of human admiration, sensitive
Lest some incautious hand might brush away
Its richest ornament, the singleness
Of a devoted spirit, for the breath
Of human praise is hurtful, and the soul
Most gracious when reserv'd for God himself.

Thus God confounds our pride, employing oft
Things feeble in themselves, despis'd by man,

* "Gnadenthal" implies "Vale of Grace."

High purposes to serve ; from causes small
Sublime effects producing ; thus the spring
Oozing from rock or marsh, originates
The broad majestic river, acorns yield
The tow'ring oak. Simplicity of means
The channel of omnipotence becomes,
And instruments the world supremely scorns
Rise glorious in results. As from the bed
Of the deep sea, the coral insect rears
Gigantic piles, immovably secure
In storms and furious wave, and broadly lays
The strong foundations of some future isle
In ocean's vast abyss—thus rise aloft,
One knows not how, so suddenly they spring
From deep obscurity, the glorious fruits
Of persevering labours, efforts made
In suffering and neglect, the prayers and tears
Of simple men—a savage race reclaim'd,
Their nature chang'd, society renew'd,
Purg'd of admitted vice, reorganized.
Raised like an island o'er the mighty flood
Of evil that engulphs a deluged world,
A safe retreat, were wand'ring seeds may fall,
And righteous plants take root, while God protects
His providence around, like coral reefs,
To shield it from the ocean's furious wave.

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